The National Cadet Corps (NCC) is today the world's largest uniformed youth organization with an authorized strength of 13 lakhs cadets. Exercise to increase authorized strength of NCC is taken up from time to time.

CAG's observation regarding functioning of OFBs

898. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the remedial measures taken by Government in view of the CAG observation that Ordnance Factory Boards (OFBs) manufacture of 23 mm ammunition for Silka and 30 mm guns mounted on Infantry Combat Vehicles was riddled with bad production planning, inefficient and uneconomic production of components and inadequate quality control;

(b) the reason for not improving performance of OFBs even after CAG's 2003 report which observed that an ordnance factory had provided defective tank ammunition worth Rs. 600 crores to army; and

(c) the punitive action taken against officials found responsible for sub standard tank ammunition and equipments?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) have created production capacity based on the requirement of Armed Forces. However, the annual requirement of stores fluctuates due to various reasons. While annual supply of 30 mm ammunition conformed to the requirement of the user, annual supply of 23 mm Schilka ammunition suffered disruptions on account of certain drawbacks in design. The design has been suitably modified by OFB and DGQA. The supply of the ammunition as per modified design has been planned from next financial year.

(b) The tank ammunition was produced as per approved technology and the supply was affected only after proof and acceptance by the designated agency. The indigenous technology of propellant was not available for 125 mm HE/HEAT ammunition and a decision was taken to use triple base propellant developed by DRDO. For 125 mm FSAPDS ammunition, a decision was taken to use Russian technology due to limited capacity of indigenous sources. Subsequently, quality problems were noticed in these ammunitions and a decision was taken in Ministry of Defence in consultation with all stakeholders to:—

(i) replace triple base propellant by single base propellant in 125 HE/HEAT Ammunition;

(ii) replace combustible cartridge case of Russian design with combustible cartridge case of DRDO technology in 125 FSAPDS ammunition.

(c) In view of above, the question does not arise.